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DECORATION & FURNITURE

NEW HOUSES—INDOORS AND OUT.

II.



ET us take a trip out of town. Pomfret, or Pomfret Street as its inhabitants call it, is a Connecticut locality. It cannot be called a village, and should not be called a street, for street there is none nor even a row of houses. At about a mile or so from the railroad station a number of mod-

ern villas of the Newport style, with a maximum of red roof and a minimum of brown house, none of them within shouting distance of another, confront a solitary specimen of the same species. A little glen runs between, and a long strip of variegated woodland, which seems to contain every tree and plant native to the State, borders it till it arrives at the foot of the prominence, in summer blue with wild houstonias, on which stands the house. This is not very different from the others as to its exterior. Its sole distinction is a piazza supported on slender columns and Moorish arches, from which one can look up and down the winding valley and see the rain slanting down upon the Massachusetts hills. From this piazza one enters a short hall painted in brownish-orange tones which continue up the stairway. At one side opens the parlor, lighted by a large window joining on the piazza, and a bay filled with stained glass which overlooks the carriage-way and the garden at the side of the house. The ceiling of this room is low and flat. It has been painted with an elaborate design of Moorish ornament in small patterns, not often repeating, and kept together by the longer lines which run through and over them. The walls are painted also, but only in changing tones of green, without a pattern except for a low dado and a narrow frieze, both, like the ceiling, Moorish in character. Eastern stuffs and embroideries, Eastern cabinets and potteries and rugs, and furniture as much as possible of Eastern design, fill the room. The only exceptions to this treatment are the panels of the bay window, which are painted with Renaissance decorations of grotesque animals and festoons of fruit and flowers.

At the other side of the hall is the dining-room, which is lighted by one large window opening on the piazza. A coved recess holds the buffet. Otherwise the room is nearly square in plan, and it is low-ceiled like the other. Here the painting is made to suggest, and in some cases even to imitate, panelled woodwork. A little ornament of the Moorish sort is worked in here and there. The recess before alluded to contains some elaborate work in imitation of antique Venetian stamped leather. The plastering first received a coating of wax on which gilding was applied in a manner which allows the squares of gold foil to show, giving the work the appearance of a gold mosaic. This was toned with a scumble of various rich browns and then stamped with small hand stamps and painted by hand with a large diaper pattern, including, here and there, instead of conventional ornament, small figure medallions. The effect in the low-toned room is extremely rich.

All of this work—the toning of the walls, and the painted ceiling in the parlor, and the imitation of a variety of materials in the dining-room—may be said to exemplify the great number of effects that the wax vehicle in painting is capable of. The first surprise of the visitor at finding himself in a little Hispano-moresque palace in the wilds of Connecticut, is scarcely over before he finds himself wondering at the rich appearance that may be given to a house by the use of this one medium. Yet the most beautiful room in the house is of much less astonishing character. It is a small study, the walls of which were left in the creamy rough-cast that is peculiar to that portion of the country. The windows are draped with a gray figured stuff making soft folds. The furniture is white wood. The other draperies and every article in and every part of the room are of different tints and textures of white material, chosen with

such as are already pretty well known, that are as elaborately decorated as that described above, and during the winter all practical building operations in the country have, of course, to be suspended; but the architects are busy with plans and estimates for villas and cottages which are to show themselves with the first green blades of the new crops. Mr. D. W. Willard is working on the drawings for a substantial house which is to have the outer picturesqueness of a Swiss chalet, with a great many more appliances for comfort in the interior than are usually to be met with in such a habitation. It is to be at Pondquogue, Long Island. A great feature in the architecture will be a large veranda running around three sides of the house. The furniture for this house has been in great part designed by Mr. Willard. The dining-room table is an excellent piece of engineering in this line. It is built both broad and strong, with four firm legs carrying a big wooden tray between them, and there are simple and ingenious arrangements for adding to its already very respectable dimensions if required.

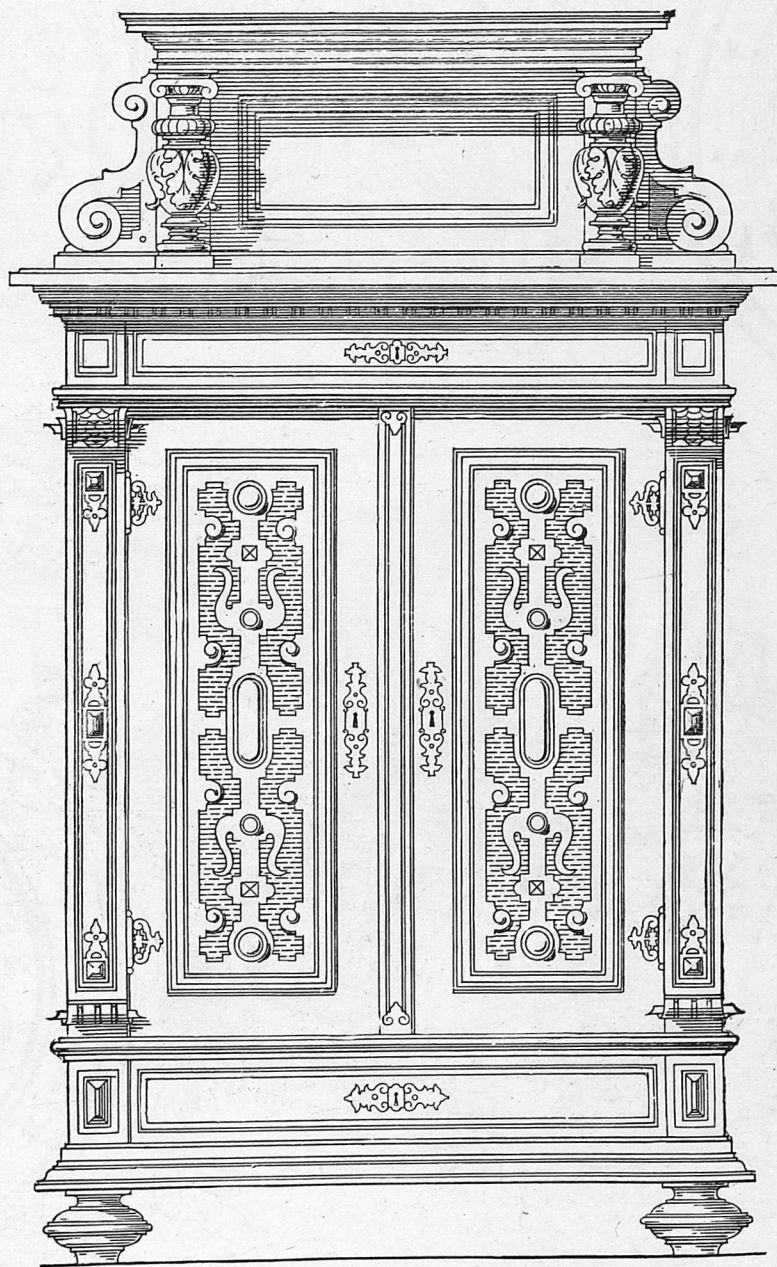
Messrs. Babb & Cook are building at Orange, N. J., a house which has some original architectural features. The main hall is disposed so that one may pass right through it to an immense semicircular veranda protected from the weather by glass and communicating by glass doors with the sitting-room and with the dining-room at the other side of the hall through a bay worked on the outside into the general profile of the veranda, which in this manner is made into a connecting link, more private than the hall, between the other parts of the house. The veranda opens on a long stretch of meadow and will serve as a place of family reunion and for social gatherings of an unconventional sort.

This manner of arranging the rooms on the ground floor, so as to allow of considerable freedom as to their use, and to permit a more hospitable way of living than used to be common, is now growing in favor. In a house at Inwood, N. Y., which is being built by the same firm, the hall is so placed that the staircase is thrown to one side from the small vestibule, and well lighted from the front. Back of the stairs is the small study which the owner was satisfied to have. A veranda starts from the vestibule on the other side and turns the corner, making a great semicircular bay which almost encloses the parlor. Both the parlor and the dining-room can be entered from the hall, and they are connected by another large bay, the whole of which can be added to the parlor if occasion should arise.

At Belport, on the south shore of Long Island, a very sensibly arranged cottage is to go up in the spring. It consists of three adjoining portions, having in front the entrance hall, parlor, and dining-room, and to one side

the children's rooms in a sort of extension. The rear of this extension, carried around so as to mask the rear of the dining-room, is devoted to the kitchen and the servants' quarters. A long covered passage leads to the outhouses, and in front of this is a shed for cleaning guns. The whole is under one of those delightful old style Dutch roofs, of which the long curving slopes covered with gray shingles harmonize so well with the lines of our simple suburban landscapes.

Generally speaking, a building in the country or in the suburbs offers a much more complicated problem to the architect than a city house; but there are occa-



SIMPLE DESIGN FOR A CABINET.

great discrimination. A few proofs of wood-engravings and drawings in black-and-white simply framed adorn the walls. The owner of the house is one of our best-known wood engravers, but the work referred to is not his own. He can raise his eyes from his desk and look out over a constantly changing landscape. The flowers and insects which he engraves like a second Bewick are by him on his desk or in a case on the wall, and in summer all he has to do, if he wishes to study them in life, is to take a stroll in his own woods which lap around two sides of the house.

There are few country houses of the size except

sions in his town practice of greater difficulty than ever can occur where space is no object. The most troublesome job that any architect can have to do is the remodelling of an old-fashioned city dwelling, to which the necessary additions can be made only at front and rear, and generally only at the rear. Mr. Babb is just completing a task of this sort at the corner of Sev-

which a flood of light is carried to the pantry and basement stairs. The space between the two ceilings is sufficiently great to permit of a person entering to clean it out whenever necessary. The library in this house is in cherry stained mahogany-color, with a mantel in marble of a dark blood-red with black and white markings. The dining-room so ingeniously supplemented is in oak.

To finish as we began with a dash of color, we could have nothing better or prettier to describe than the frieze which Mr. Paul Nefflen is painting for the dining-room of Mr. Jacob Ruppert's house at Ninety-third Street and Fifth Avenue. Mr. Ruppert is one of those sensible people who believe in having decorations that they can understand and appreciate. Accordingly, being a brewer and not ashamed of his trade, he has had Mr. Nefflen paint him a jolly procession of Rhineland children grouping themselves in a hundred engaging poses among sprays of vine and barley stalks. The little ones are talking, dancing, singing, playing on musical instruments, and one group of them is trundling along a barrel of beer! Bravo! Mr. Ruppert. This is better than the Hours, and the Seasons, and the Graces, and the rest of the mythological stock in trade of our ordinary decorators, who do not themselves care a fig for the meaning of the originals which they spoil with a mechanic hand.

DEFENSIVE WINDOW DECORATION.

How often the mistress of a household has an eyesore! Sometimes it is one thing, sometimes another, but whatever it may be it is invariably the most prominent object within her range of vision. Sometimes the grievance is a hideous wall-paper against which the most artistic upholstery and carving lose their effect. Sometimes it is one of the icily-cold and rigidly "correct" mantelpieces of a quarter of a century ago, firmly fixed in its "coign of vantage," and obstinately refusing to lend itself to any æsthetic disguise whatever. Sometimes it is none of these, and the "pet" room is perfect in all its essentials of wall-paper, carpet, curtains, furniture and chimney-piece, yet with an eye-sore in the one window which overlooks a city back yard, with dust bins and ash barrels in full relief, or a country one with a near prospect of stables. Many plans are devised to conceal this eyesore, which cannot be

from the eye. A light gilt moulding or beading running around this arrangement gives an excellent effect. The floral design must of course be managed with taste, of good and harmonious color, well cut, sewn and arranged, or the result, with the light throwing it up in relief, is worse even than stable or dust bins.

Some skilful hands have been very successful in ornamenting windows with designs cut from colored gela-



DECORATIVE PANEL. BY CH. LAMEIRE.

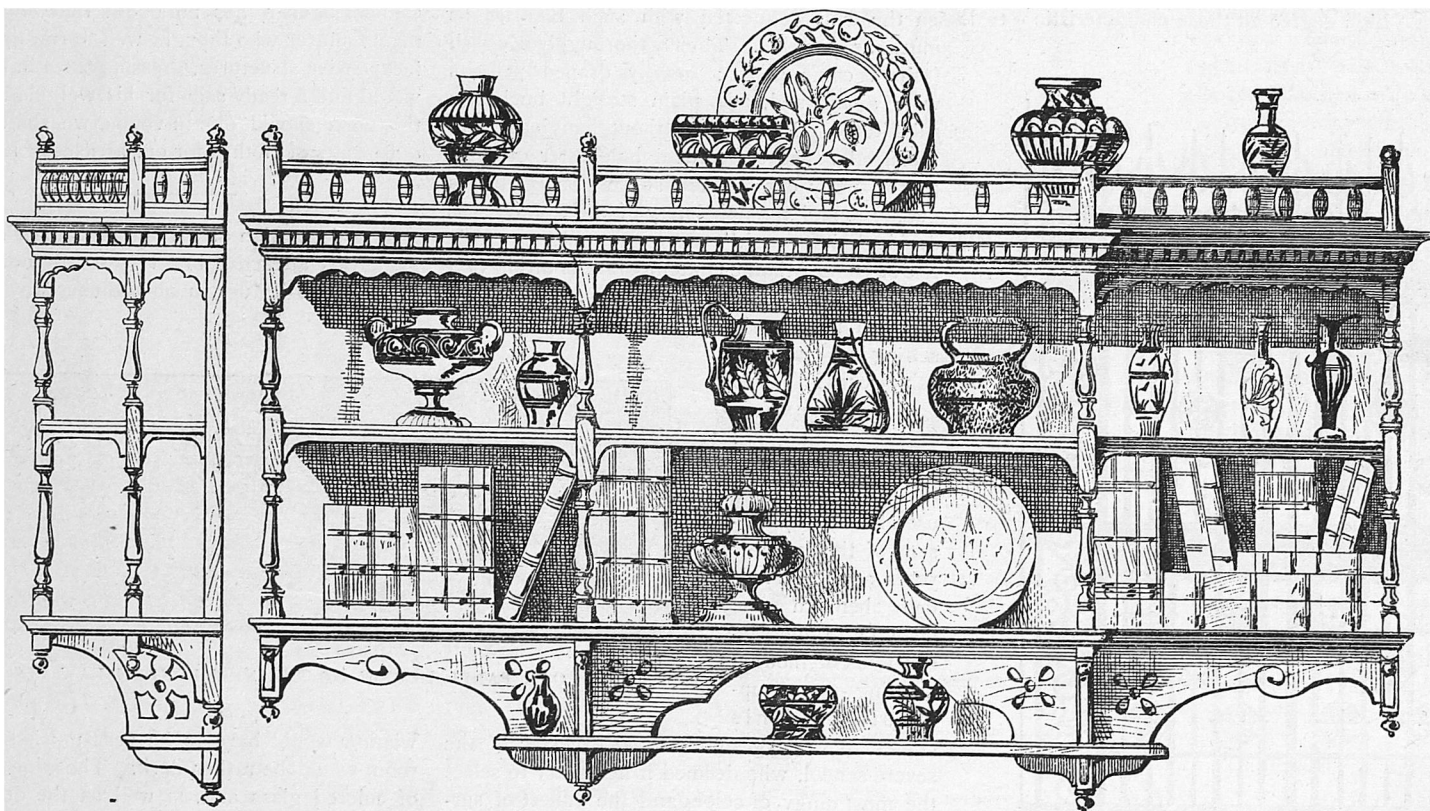


DECORATIVE PANEL. BY CH. LAMEIRE.

enty-first Street and Park Avenue, where his ingenuity in this kind of work has been severely taxed. The house was of the ordinary plan with a narrow entrance hall and stairway pinching, and pinched by, the room which opened off it. Mr. Babb's first expedient to gain more room was to take advantage of the house having a front on the side street, and to shift the entrance to a point near the centre of that, thus gaining for the room in front—now become the library—the additional width of the former hall. Beside this, the ground occupied by the stoop was utilized for a projecting bay. The upper part of the staircase was retained, and the lower flight was turned round so as to enter the new and broad hall which now cuts the forward portion of the building in two. At the other side of this is the parlor, and beyond that an extension containing the dining-room on the main floor and kitchen in the basement. One corner of the dining-room is cut off to contain the kitchen stairs and pantry, and this room receives light from the street by a simple but ingenious device. The passage from the dining-room to the parlor runs between this pantry and the street, and is lighted by a handsome bay. Over this bay on the exterior is a semi-circular arched window forming one architectural arrangement with it. At the height of the sill of this window there is a false ceiling to the passage, over

tine, but the effect is usually somewhat too vivid and sharp, and the work too elaborate. Another plan is to veil the window entirely with French tracing paper upon which figure designs are drawn and bordered with a conventional pattern. The effect aimed at, and attained when the workmanship and draughtsmanship are good, is of etching on ground glass, the figures being in outline and very slightly shaded by lines. Previous to being drawn upon, the paper must be stretched upon panes of glass exactly fitting the compartments they are intended to fill. This is the great difficulty of the process, the paper being so delicate it is likely to split. Any inequality of surface in the glass is also almost sure

to break the paper. The glass ought to be light and delicate that as little weight as possible may be put upon the sash. The panes and designs may easily be fastened into the required position by means of a small beading, and the designs being then enclosed between two glasses are safe from injury. To secure success in the straining



SIMPLE DESIGN FOR HANGING BOOK-SHELVES.

closed up entirely for the reason that its light is essential in the room. Plants are the usual resource, but many housekeepers object to flowers in their "pet" rooms and keep them only in their ordinary and everyday apartments. One successful plan of decorative concealment is to fill the entire window with a frame upon which are two taut surfaces of muslin with chintz flowers sewn upon the surface nearest the light and farthest

the paper should be made very wet by squeezing a sponge over it, but without touching it. The glass may be just sufficiently tilted to allow the water to run off, but no work should be attempted upon it until the following day. The corners should then be stuck with cement, that being preferable to either gum or paste, neither of which will adhere to the wet paper. The designs must be transferred by tracing from good pat-

terns. The paper should be made very wet by squeezing a sponge over it, but without touching it. The glass may be just sufficiently tilted to allow the water to run off, but no work should be attempted upon it until the following day. The corners should then be stuck with cement, that being preferable to either gum or paste, neither of which will adhere to the wet paper. The designs must be transferred by tracing from good pat-